2007 Annual School Report
Burwood Girls High School

“The best education that money cannot buy”
Our school at a glance

Messages

Principal's message

Our focus for 2007 at Burwood Girls High School was on four areas:

• achieving excellence in educational outcomes for all (with special emphasis on gifted and talented programs)
• improving the quality of assessing and reporting student outcomes and achievement
• implementing the student welfare policy and procedures consistently across the school
• using technology effectively both to improve student learning and to support school administration.

There has been significant progress in achieving our goals this year and I would particularly like to thank the school executive for the positive way in which they have accepted changes and challenges. Thank you to my colleagues for your support and for accepting new responsibilities to ensure that Burwood Girls retains its position as a leading secondary school in the public education system. The results in the 2007 Higher School Certificate were outstanding.

In May, we were pleased to welcome the new Minister for Education, John Della Bosca and local member, Virginia Judge to our school. They were able to see first hand the fine efforts the teachers and students are contributing to public education.

Our continued focus on technology has resulted in considerable expenditure on hardware, software and professional learning opportunities for all staff. Our school development days involved technology workshops, learning to use test data to make informed judgements, technology to enhance learning in the classroom as well as management of the new computerised reporting system.

We also hosted the launch of new technologies in the teaching of mathematics and science.

Both students and staff have received recognition for their personal achievements.

The news that the school was to receive a significant upgrade to science and PDHPE facilities was applauded by the school community. Planning was completed in 2007 for commencement of the building program in 2008. We look forward to the new facilities with excitement.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

Mia Kumar
School Council message

Burwood Girls High School encourages staff, students, parents and community members to participate in the school’s decision-making process. Our School Council ensures that all these groups have an input into the running of the school. Council members are involved in such matters as:

- representation on interview panels for the selection of staff
- determining school aims and policies
- identifying education needs and services
- assessing the school’s budget/financial needs
- facilities improvements
- SRC – Student Representative Council
- determining and implementing school policies and procedures
- reviewing school security and OHS concerns.

Tim Cunningham,
School Council Executive

Student representative’s message

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is a vital part of the Burwood Girls High School community; it works as a voice for the students. Student representatives are chosen by their peers from each year group up to and including Year 11. It is the role of these elected students to represent their year group in making decisions that concern the school and the student body and acting on these decisions.

In 2007, the SRC was split into a senior SRC and a junior SRC where both groups worked on organising and putting together events such as International Day, International Women’s Day as well as each individual year group fundraising for a charity and the school. The members of the SRC met regularly to discuss issues that concern the school, which were then taken to the executive.

As members of the SRC we have found that being a member has helped us improve our leadership skills, communication skills and encouraged us to develop a sense of responsibility in the school. We have found the SRC to be a worthwhile and valuable voice in the school community.

Alison Baillie, President SRC 2007

P&C message

Burwood Girls High School Parents & Citizens Association is a small but active group, which meets on the third Wednesday of the month during the school term. New members are welcomed especially those joining for the first time as their daughters start Year 7.

The P&C is a community group, which included parents, school staff and community members working together to provide opportunities for the benefit of our children. It contributes funds to the school and has a vital say in what affects students at the school. During 2007 it has set aside funds for outdoor furniture for new playground areas in 2008.

The P&C supported the school by taking part in discussions, by keeping informed about activities within the school and helping in the direction of the school. Head teachers and staff have addressed meetings, helping parents gain a better understanding of the school curriculum and policies. The P&C operated the school uniform shop and were active in supporting uniform initiatives and changes for 2007.

Elaine Brown, P&C President

School context

Student enrolment profile

In February 2007, our enrolment was 1073 with 167 girls entering Year 7 and 190 commencing Year 11. Student enrolments are at a maximum and it is impossible to satisfy the great demand for places at the school.
Student attendance profile

The student attendance rate is above that of other schools in the region and in the state. Years 7-10 attendance was 94.1% compared to 90.1% statewide, which continues the trend in previous years. Attendance rates for Years 11/12 have improved but were slightly lower than that for Years 7-10. At 93.8% it is still significantly higher than the state average of 89.7% and regional average of 90.9%.

The attendance policy implemented in 2006 has led to better procedures to identify, monitor and follow up attendance issues. The implementation of ‘Truancy Call’, which is a system for contacting parents when students are absent or late to school, has been beneficial. The new attendance system introduced this year has enabled close monitoring of students who are consistently late to school.

Post-school destinations

For 2008, 66% of Year 12 students were offered first round placements to universities in Sydney, country and interstate. Approximately 8% enrolled in TAFE courses, 4% enrolled in courses offered by private providers and a small number of students deferred university to travel overseas.

Staff information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Staff establishment

The total staffing is 73.8 teaching staff and 12.6 non-teaching staff including an office manager, administration staff, a general assistant, a part-time gardener and integration support staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careers Adviser</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band Coordinator</td>
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Retention to Year 12

Between the 2005 School Certificate and 2007 Higher School Certificate, a higher proportion of our students continued their studies. Our retention rate at 85.6% was greater than the regional rate of 78.5% and much higher than the state rate of 60.8%.
Staff retention

The school's staff retention rate from 2006 to 2007 was 96%. Three temporary teachers were appointed permanently to the school. One administrative member of staff relocated to a country school after fifty years' association with the school as a former student, parent and colleague.

At the end of 2007, our Head Teacher English was appointed to James Ruse HS, five members of staff retired and one teacher received a promotion to Head Teacher Social Sciences at Chatswood High School at the end of Term 1.

Staff attendance

Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2007 the average daily attendance rate for staff as determined by the Department was 95.8%.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

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Financial summary

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2007

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Income</th>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
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<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
<td>39,074.66</td>
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<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>103,326.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure

Teaching & learning

- Key learning areas: 197,069.05
- Excursions: 213,626.81
- Extracurricular dissections: 213,492.45

Library: 15,359.53
Training & development: 1,556.20
Tied funds: 168,788.10
Casual relief teachers: 108,717.76
Administration & office: 482,557.13
School-operated canteen: 0.00
Utilities: 63,300.35
Maintenance: 106,268.99
Capital programs: 173,131.12
Total expenditure: 1,846,280.29

Balance carried forward: 545,883.17

A full copy of the school's 2007 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2007

Achievements

Arts

It was a vibrant year for the Arts at BGHS. The Renaissance Concert, held at St Andrew's Church, Summer Hill, was again a wonderful evening of song, instrumentals and dance. The A Cappella Group, the Junior Choir and the Camerata String Ensemble featured strongly, as did Year 12 music students, with beautiful performances.
In visual arts the highlight was the Year 12 HSC Body of Work Exhibition evening which attracted a large audience and was of a very high standard, evident in the preselection of four students for the ArtExpress Exhibition.

One student gained final selection in ArtExpress at the College of Fine Arts, UNSW. Four of our Year 11 students participated in gifted and talented workshops at Bundanong and two students won selection in the highly prized National Art School HSC Extension Course in Studio Practice. Photographic and Digital Media students in Years 9 and 10 entered the Robin Anderson Film Award and won selection in the inaugural Marrickville Film Festival. Career information sessions were held to inform students about post secondary courses available at design colleges. The wall painting collaboration between our senior students and Sydney College of the Arts resulted in the transformation of the western corridor with colourful optical motifs.

Performing Arts

The talents of our performing arts students was showcased at Variety Night, held during Education Week. Music, dance and drama students entertained a receptive audience and were supported by the Senior Concert Band, Intermediate Band, String Ensemble and A Cappella singers.

Senior Drama students performed in the annual Drama Showcase whilst a Junior Drama Evening became the platform to celebrate the achievements of Stage 5 students. Theatre of the absurd, scripted mime and performance art pieces were highlights of this showcase. The Shakespeare Festival was also a major achievement for junior students with one duologue performance achieving at regional level.

Students in Years 7 and 8 continued to show enthusiasm in debating with over 30 students trying out for a place on one of two competitive teams. They participated in the Premier’s Challenge and their efforts culminated in their award as zone winners.

An Intra-School Debating Competition in Years 7 and 8 offered students opportunities to debate local high schools whilst an internal school debating competition in Year 9 offered debating opportunities for Stage 5 students.

The Year 10/11 Debating team duplicated the success of Years 7 and 8 by becoming zone winners of the Premier’s Challenge.

Burwood Ensemble Program

The program maintained its school ensembles of three full concert bands, a stage band, a choir, a string ensemble and many chamber ensembles. The community program also remained strong supporting three concert bands, including an ensemble for players with ages ranging from 15 to 82. A program for senior high school students to start learning how to teach instruments was initiated.

This year saw the first performance of our very own complete orchestra at the school. It successfully performed the Fourth Movement of Mendelssohn’s Reformation Symphony at a fundraising evening ‘A Little Night Music’.

The bands performed at a large number of events, supported by Wests Ashfield, Burwood Council, Burwood Lions and Rotary. The ensemble program performed in more than 100 different events. Members of the band program also were involved in a tour of the South Coast region.
A highlight of our year is always the work undertaken with the Military Police Association which adopted the Intermediate Concert Band and marched together with them at ANZAC Day in the city as well as on Reserve Forces Day.

The instrumental teachers provided great support with the two Soiree Weeks and the Staff Concert. A successful ‘Play-a-thon’ was conducted to raise money for instruments.

**Sport**

Burwood GHS has continued to dominate in all areas of sport in 2007. There were many successes at zone, regional and state levels. Once again, we were the Northern Suburbs Zone Overall Girls Champion School. This was due to our swimming, cross country and athletics teams placing first in the zone competitions.

There were 270 entries for zone competitions, 50 at regional level and an amazing 20 students who competed at state level and four at national level.

In both summer and winter grade sport competitions, again the students’ performance was outstanding. Winning teams were the juniors (14s) netball, softball, touch football, European handball, volleyball and soccer. In the 15s competition the winning teams were touch football, basketball, volleyball and soccer and in the opens touch football, netball, volleyball and soccer.

The school was represented at the following Knockout Regional competitions: basketball, cricket, hockey, netball, softball, touch football, water polo, football, indoor soccer, gymnastics and rowing.

Sports that students were selected to play in a state competition or national team were water polo (2), touch football (1), basketball (1), football (soccer) (2), hockey (2), gymnastics (3), rowing (1) and athletics (4).

The Under 16s Indoor Soccer team was state runners-up and Under 14s were regional champions and just missed out on a place in the state final.

A Year 8 student was placed eighth in the state rowing championship and two students were selected in national teams for ice skating.
A total of 23 Year 9 students have undertaken a surf awareness day and 29 Year 10 students took part in a two-day surf camp with Let’s Go Surfing school at Bondi Beach.

Academic

Literacy – ELLA Year 7

English literacy in Years 7 and 8 was tested using the statewide English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA). Our results were excellent. For Year 7 in 2007, 62.3% were in the high level, 34.6% proficient, 3.1% elementary and 0% low.

The graph below indicates the results for Year 7 in the ELLA tests for 2007 were better than previous years and significantly better than the like school group (LSG) and the state average.

In Year 8, 78.6% were in the high level compared to 45.6% statewide. This is a 12.9% increase from 2006 results.

Numeracy – SNAP Year 7

Numeracy in Years 7 and 8 was measured by means of the Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP).

In the area of numeracy, our results were well above state average. In Year 7, 45.3% of students achieved a high level compared with 27.5% statewide.
In Year 8, 67.1% of students achieved a high level, compared with 38% statewide. The graph below indicates the Year 8 results for the 2007 SNAP tests were better in high category than previous years.

**School Certificate (SC)**

One hundred and seventy-six students sat for the 2007 School Certificate.

In the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate, the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).

Our results in the School Certificate were well above state average in all areas with the most outstanding performances in English, mathematics and computing skills.

In English literacy the performance of students was exceptional with 48.6% achieving Band 5 or 6 compared with 28.2% statewide. As results centred in the top two bands there were significantly fewer students in the lower bands (17.8%) compared with state averages (33.6%). This is indicative of the school's holistic approach to literacy.

In Mathematics, 64.6% of students scored in the top three bands as against the state average of 39.1%. All levels showed much greater value-added since the previous BST performances with very few in the bottom two bands. Achievements across all performance levels for students from the school compares extremely favourably with the schools in our LSG.

In Science the results were also sound with 33.1% gaining Band 5 or 6 compared with 23% statewide. Fewer students were represented in the lower three bands compared to the state performance.
In History results in the top three bands were above the state average with 29.2% of students scoring in Band 5 or 6. This compared favourably with the statewide figure of 20.5% and very favourably with the LSG of 16.3%.

In Geography there was some improvement in SC results with 73.7% of students achieving Band 4 or higher, slightly above state average. Significantly, 90% of students achieved A, B or C grades as opposed to 71% statewide in this subject.

The results of the external examination in the Computer Skills Assessment were outstanding with 73% students deemed highly competent compared with 53.4% statewide.
As can be seen from the graph, in 2007 the school was able to add value to student performance in most subjects, notably in English and Computer Skills. The growth overall was not as strong as the previous years, but significantly higher than state relative growth in all subjects except Geography.

**Higher School Certificate**

In 2007, 179 students sat for the Higher School Certificate (HSC).

The school offered 44 different courses including two vocational courses: Hospitality and Information Technology. Four language courses, two with extension, were offered and a further seven language courses were accessed outside the school. Students also accessed additional vocational courses through TAFE (Accounting, Tourism, Design, Childcare) and at Sydney Secondary College (Entertainment Industry).

Student performance is reported in achievement Bands 1 to 6 (Band 6 being the highest level of achievement). Compared to the state means, the most outstanding performances were in Business Studies, Drama, English as a Second Language, Mathematics Extension 1 and 2, Music 1, Physics, Chinese Continuers, Chinese Background Speakers, French Extension and Italian Beginners.

The following graphs indicate the performance in all subjects with a candidature greater than 10 students, compared to the state and like school group.
The graphs indicate results in the 28 different courses that contained 10 or more candidates from this school, were mostly better than schools in LSG and well above state average in all courses except General Mathematics, Senior Science and Studies of Religion.

Analysis of the results for 2007 include the following:

- The results for all English courses continued to be outstanding and were significantly above state averages.
- In Standard English, 66% of students gained Bands 4 and 5 compared with 39% statewide.
- In Advanced English, 78% of students achieved results in the top two bands compared with 47% statewide. No students achieved results in the lower three bands.
- In English Extension 1, 100% of students achieved in the top two bands.
- In English Extension 2, 91% of students achieved in the top two bands.
- In English as a Second Language, 100% of students achieved in the top three bands with 69% of students achieving Band 5 or 6 compared to 27% statewide.
- In Drama, 90% of students received Band 5 or 6 and one student Band 4. Two students were nominated for ‘On Stage’ for their individual performance whilst one student was awarded the Young Playwright of the Year.
- In Mathematics results were outstanding, especially Mathematics (2 unit), Extension 1 and Extension 2. In Mathematics, 49% achieved Band 5/6, for Extension 1 97% achieved the top two bands and for Extension 2, 100% in the top two bands. The General Mathematics results were similar to state means.
- In Science, students sat for examinations in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Senior...
Science. In Physics, over 70% of students achieved Band 5 or 6. For Biology and Chemistry, over 43% of students achieved Band 5 or 6, which was above the state performance. Results in Senior Science were below state performance for Bands 6 and 5.

- Results for Modern History and Extension History were above state average. In Modern History 56% of students gained Band 5 and above. In Extension History all students gained Band 3 or above with Band 4 being the highest. In Ancient History over 33% of students gained Band 5 and above, and in Studies of Religion, 30% of students gained Band 5.

- Legal Studies and Business Studies results were outstanding with more than half of the candidature in both subjects achieving Band 5 or 6. One Business Studies student was placed 8th in the state. In Economics more than 90% were Band 4 or above. In Society and Culture, the number of students achieving Band 5 or 6 was more than double the statewide percentages. In all the Social Sciences subjects, there was significant value added to the girls' School Certificate results.

- In Hospitality and Textiles and Design, students achieved above state average. 59% of students achieved Band 5 or 6 in Textiles and Design, compared to the state average of 50%. One student's work was exhibited in Texstyle at Vaucluse House and another student was awarded $2000 as a Vocational Student of the Year in Hospitality.

- The three HSC computer-based courses, Information Processes and Technology, Information Technology, and Software Design and Development, had small number of candidates. In each course nearly all students showed an above average value-added score, and 31% of students gained Band 4 or higher.

- In 2007, eight HSC languages courses were taught at Burwood GHS: Chinese Background Speakers, Continuers and Extension; French Continuers and Extension; Indonesian Continuers; and Italian Beginners and Extension. Results were of a very high standard and well above state averages. In Chinese Continuers, 100% of students gained a Band 6. A majority of students gained Band 6 or 5 in other Language Continuers subjects (Chinese Background Speakers 91.3%, French 70%, Indonesian 50%) and in Italian Beginners 58%. Students studying at Extension levels also performed well with 100% of French Extension students achieving the highest band. In Chinese Extension, 60% of students were in the top band. One student in Chinese Background Speakers was placed 6th in the state. In addition, nine students studied five HSC languages via the Open High School and seven students studied their background languages via the Saturday School of Community Languages (SSCL). Again students achieved highly with 67% gaining a Band 6 or 5 in these subjects.

- Music 1 students achieved excellent results with 100% of students gaining Band 6 compared with 15% in the state. In Music 2, all students achieved at Band 4 or above. Music Extension results were very pleasing with all students achieving in the top two bands.

- Visual Arts results were excellent with 79% of students gaining a Band 5 or 6 compared with 52% across the state. Four students were nominated for consideration for the ArtExpress exhibition and one student gained final selection.

- PDHPE results were above state average with 38% of students achieving a Band 5 or 6 compared to 35% statewide.

Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

Seventy-five students received a total of 170 Band 6 levels in 39 different courses. The following graph indicates the average level of academic growth of students from the School Certificate to the Higher School Certificate (value-added). By definition state average value-added is zero.
The level of value-added for students at this school continues to be outstanding by comparison with the LSG and the state levels. In particular the value-added for higher performing students from SC (2005) to HSC (2007) exceeds the already high levels indicated by the school average in 2003-2007.

Five students achieved Premier’s Awards for 10 or more units at a Band 6 level.

While the academic growth was not as high for the lower and middle performing students it was significantly higher than the LSG and state average.

**National benchmarks**

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum desirable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. These are referred to as national benchmarks.

The performance of students in the Year 7 English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA) and Year 7 Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP) is compared to these benchmarks.

### Percentage of Year 7 students in our school achieving benchmarks in 2006 and 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>91.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* National benchmarks were not available at the time of printing this report.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**

Awareness of Australia’s unique Aboriginal tradition was emphasised. For some years, the weekly school assemblies have begun with students’ publicly acknowledging the Eora people, the traditional custodians of the land. A mandatory part of all subjects in the curriculum is the teaching and learning of Aboriginal perspectives.

The culture and heritage of Aboriginals was celebrated during ATSIC week when Mr Phil Geia from Yarrabah near Cairns entertained the school with traditional stories and songs. A highlight of this performance was a vibrant indigenous rap session. He was publicly welcomed by several of our Aboriginal students at the annual NAIDOC Assembly.

Four teams of students were invited to Parliament House for the Aboriginal Reconciliation Convention in August. They participated with other school representatives, both indigenous and non-indigenous from across the state to draft a Statement of Reconciliation.

**Multicultural education**

The school’s non-English speaking background group was 83%, which represented 54 different language groups. Amongst staff members, the population from non-English speaking backgrounds was 36%. In addition to students studying five languages at Burwood GHS, 15 students studied languages via the Open High School and 47 students studied their background languages at Saturday School of Community Languages. Japanese Beginners was introduced as an HSC course for the first time in 2007.

Throughout the year staff and students gained valuable cultural experience, understanding and knowledge through participating in various overseas opportunities. Two staff, a parent and 10 students enjoyed a study tour to Thailand in April. Two students participated in long term overseas exchange programs to France and Italy and two staff members were awarded DET
Endeavour Foundation scholarships for language study in China and Japan.

Our school has always been a popular choice for visits by overseas educators interested in seeing the implementation of teaching and learning programs and policies. In 2007 educator groups from China, Korea and Greece visited the school. Student groups from Ningxia province in China and Seien Girls School in Japan were also made welcome by our students.

As in past years our annual International Day celebrations coincided with Harmony Day. This colourful event saw students in an array of national dress and costumes or wearing orange. With a strong focus on student leadership, 22 different food stalls allowed our students and the wider community to sample foods from around the world. The highlight of the day was the concert showcasing talented performances from individuals and groups of students. Funds were raised for our overseas aid program “Hands Across the Ocean” and sent to orphanages in Ghana, Bali, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan to increase educational opportunities for these children.

Multicultural education continues in the classroom with teachers and students utilising a range of resources to further develop their understanding of our global community.

We are proud of the cultural harmony that bonds our girls into a strong multicultural community and contributes to our positive and respectful school culture.

Respect and responsibility

The school has further developed strategies to promote respect and responsibility.

Following a review of the welfare policy, in 2006 the school implemented our student responsibilities and code of conduct which were published in both the student handbook and student diary.

These values are also taught in the junior curriculum through the mandatory studies of History and Geography: Civics and Citizenship. Students are consistently engaged in classroom learning that equips them with the knowledge, skills and values that will help them become responsible informed citizens who show respect for all people and also for the environment.

All Year 9 students were involved in the community volunteer program which fosters the girls’ understanding of the needs of others and provides opportunity for demonstrating civic responsibility. Students from Years 7 to 12 participated in volunteer work for charity organisations; such as collecting money for the Salvation Army’s Red Shield Appeal in May.

The students raised funds for distribution to other charities such as Canteen, Red Cross, Jeans for Genes Day and Legacy. The total amount raised was almost $5000.

The school incorporated our anti-bullying policy into the Year 7 PDHPE program and addressed the policy with each year group at the start of the
year and through targeted workshops at our welfare days.

Cultural exchange programs such as the overseas trip to Thailand provided students with a broader understanding of the characteristics and needs of other cultures. In 2007 we had international exchange programs with Italy, Switzerland, France and Germany.

The school held Harmony Day coinciding with our annual International Day to showcase the talents of students from different cultural backgrounds.

In 2007 we presented six different parent evenings to provide relevant and timely information and forums for parental participation in the life of the school and in the education of their daughters.

**Student Leadership**

To foster active participation and to provide more leadership opportunities, the SRC was divided into two groups in 2007 – junior and senior. Each group met on alternate weeks and worked on strategies to promote civic responsibility and to enhance students’ role in decision-making in the school.

The student representatives led groups for our annual International Day celebrations and promoted women’s issues with an International Women’s Day assembly as well as activities in the local community with women of all ages.

There was regular representation at inter-school, district and state meetings and three girls from Year 10 joined the School Council and spoke at each meeting on behalf of the students. Seniors were trained in conducting focus groups to gather vital information from a large sample of students on values education.

As always, fundraisers were organised by each year group to support a range of charities, both Australian and global. These included Butterfly Foundation, the Starlight Foundation, NACCHOS (Aboriginal Health), Pink Ribbon Day and sponsorship of two African orphanages.
The prefects also continued their “Hands Across the Ocean” projects and also actively represented the school at a range of leadership seminars. Chairing assemblies gave the prefects opportunities to develop their public speaking skills and gave a sense of inclusivity to the school population. Likewise they also assisted on many school events, including hosting a disco for our Year 7 and 8 students, and students from Ashfield BHS and Homebush BHS.

In 2007, 34 students were involved in the Duke of Edinburgh program with 30 students achieving Bronze level, three Silver and one Gold.

**Gifted and Talented Policy**

The high quality of Rich Tasks and clear teaching and learning practices provided a strong start to the 2007 program. The school streamlined the student identification process for joining the program using a range of indicators incorporating the statewide literacy and numeracy results.

Innovative teaching strategies to enhance the development of independent thinkers and learners across the curriculum contributed significantly to an ever increasing participation of students in the program and growing interest in the school community.

**Student Welfare**

The school’s welfare program continued to review and refine improvements to monitoring students in the areas of learning, by implementing Students Causing Concern (SCC) interviews with effective and appropriate support. Priorities included:

- Welfare Team (and staff) monitoring of students on RISC program strengthened.
- SCC initiative strengthened to provide support for students identified as of concern regarding their attendance and learning, as well as emotional, psychological and physical well being.
- Follow up provided counselling, careers advice, and regular meetings with parents/caregivers.
- Welfare workshops for Years 7-10 covered topics such as body image and self esteem, peer relationships, bullying and harassment as well as cyberbullying, safe partying, drugs and alcohol. Workshops were positively received by students.
- Case management guidelines and procedures introduced provided more effective support and management of students causing concern.

The program continued to focus on Stage 4 students. A total of 22 Year 7 students embarked on the development of their tasks with energy and enthusiasm concentrating on technology and problem solving skills. The creative element, originality and notable diversity of major works typified their achievement. An evening with parents, showcased and celebrated students’ achievement.

In Year 8, 21 students worked on a specific problem solving framework and produced work of exceptional quality.
• Welfare Team workshops continued to provide opportunities for planning professional learning in areas which included restorative justice and interview techniques.

• The Year 11 Big Sisters program continued to provide support for transition into Year 7 with a series of workshops led by the Year 11 students. These included activities to improve communication.

• The Year 7 Camp at Broken Bay was a highlight for students who participated in activities including raft building, high and low ropes, archery and bushwalking. Activities provided excellent opportunities to build friendships and interact positively.

• Year 9 Great Aussie Bush Camp and the Year 11 Jindabyne excursion provided excellent outdoor and indoor activities. These camps were well received by students and strengthened cohesion of both year groups.

Progress on 2007 targets

Target 1: Quality Teaching and Learning
Our achievements include:
• use of data in SC and HSC to improve student outcomes
• innovative teaching strategies implemented
• literacy strategies revisited
• ‘rich’ tasks included as part of assessment strategies in KLAs
• teaching strategies in all KLAs reviewed
• faculty awards strengthened
• Stage 5 programs reviewed and evaluated.

Target 2: Providing Skills for Social Responsibility and Resilience
Our achievements include:
• values, civics and citizenship focus groups
• special appointments for Prefects Coordinator and International Students Coordinator
• defined responsibilities for prefects
• renewed structure for SRC
• welfare days for all years 7-12, coordinated by Head Teacher Welfare.

Target 3: Increase Use of Technology
Our achievements include:
• increased number of technology learning spaces in the school
• installation of ‘Smartboards’ and data projectors
• implementation of ‘Clickview’
• computerised reports implemented for all students, Years 7-12
• teacher workshops implemented for developing ICT skills.

Target 4: Provision of Quality Learning Environment
Our achievements include:
• classroom improvements and an increase in the number of resources
• establishment of additional technology areas
• finalising plans for school refurbishment
• reduction in number of OHS issues.

Key evaluations
It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2007 our school carried out evaluations of in the areas of curriculum structure and student learning.

Educational and management practice

Curriculum Structure

Background
There were concerns about three areas. Firstly, the Stage 4/5 curriculum was crowded and some subjects had a small amount of time allocated and hence a need to evaluate curriculum structure to better support effective learning.

Secondly, an increasing number of our senior students were choosing to study Japanese through Open High School. BGHS has a strong and successful language program which did not include Japanese.

Finally, we were concerned about the number of students changing courses after commencing Year 11. As subject choice for the HSC is critical for career paths and success in senior studies, it was necessary to make sure students made satisfactory choices in terms of their ability, interests and career aspirations. The combination of courses and work load involving major project work was also a factor to making appropriate selections.

Findings and conclusions

Curriculum Stage 4 and 5
• In Semester 1 2007, the executive researched 48 different schools to examine curriculum patterns in Stage 4/5.
• In July, a decision was made to implement a significant change for 2008 which involved:
  – increased time for History and Geography in Stage 5. The two lessons each per fortnight in Stage 4 was changed to four lessons per fortnight for History in Year 7 and four lessons per fortnight for Geography in Year 8.
  – Languages in Year 7 reduced from four lessons per fortnight to three lessons but maintained their four lesson allocation in Year 8.
  – Visual Arts remained the same, which was above mandatory levels.
  – The allocation of time for Science in Year 7 increased, but decreased in Year 10.

Subject selection process for Year 10 students
• The school identified a need to improve the subject selection process to include counselling for every student and to involve their parents in the process.
• Every student in Year 10 was interviewed by a Principal, Deputy Principal, Head Teacher Welfare, School Counsellor, Careers Adviser or Year Adviser to discuss their goals and proposed subject choices.

• A ‘Drop-In Evening’ was held prior to submission of their initial subject selection. This also provided an informal opportunity for parents and students to discuss individual choices with advice from a range of teachers.

Future directions
• Analysis of learning outcomes in 2009 following full implementation of changes to History and Geography curriculum allocations.

• Analysis of subject changes in Year 11 in 2008.

• Analysis of student and parent satisfaction with the subject selection process.

• Implement further strategies to improve the subject selection process in 2008 following feedback from parents and students.

Learning

Background
Following a review of the ELLA, SNAP and SC results at all levels, it was decided to investigate more closely how learning outcomes could be improved, even further, for our students.

Student surveys “Quality Learning Environment (Secondary)” were administered to every student in Years 7-10. The survey was thorough, involving 47 questions asking students about their learning, their classrooms, relationships with teachers and expectations.

The results were collated and tabled at the School Council Meeting, Executive Conference and Staff Meeting.

Findings and conclusions
A total of 587 responses were collated. The areas of student engagement, student direction, assessment, high expectations, student self-regulation and social support were examined.

The results were as follows:
• 86% reported that they wanted to do their best
• 82% reported teachers encourage students to do their best
• 79% said they liked to learn new things
• 73% students said they worked hard in class
• 73% reported that teachers explained what students are going to learn but only 37% said teachers explained why
• 69% equated working hard with success

• 66% students were challenged
• 53% said teachers explained what needs to be done to get good results
• 50% students enjoy the work they do at school
• 38% said learning is fun
• 31% students thought homework was important
• 29% students felt teachers take a personal interest in each student
• 26% students felt teachers were available outside class time to help them
• 14% said they get to choose their own projects and 21% said they had choice in activities
• Respect for fellow students was equivalent to respect to teachers
• Very few students saw relevance in getting together in their own time to learn

Future directions
• Focus on student engagement in 2008
• Increase opportunities for students to be involved in practical tasks, research activities and oral presentations
• Consistent implementation of ‘rich tasks’ in all curriculum areas
• Innovative teaching strategies to promote independent thinking
• Improve ‘middle’ performing group by increasing SC performance by 10%
• Teachers to take interest in social as well as intellectual development of students.

Other evaluations

Student Reports
Burwood Girls High School introduced computerised student reports in Semester 1 2006. The reporting system chosen was developed by ARC Research & Development Pty Ltd, a NSW Department of Commerce approved supplier of school reporting systems.

The computerised report system produces a comprehensive and professional looking report for each student, replaced the previously used system of hand written reports, and was introduced to meet the new reporting requirements of the NSW Department of Education and Training.

The computerised reports were printed on special report paper that is watermarked with the Burwood Girls High School logo. Each student report included:
• A cover page with
  − information about the A to E grading
  − information about attendance
  − information about participation in school activities
  − a year adviser’s comment.
• A page for each subject studied with
  − an achievement level for each subject outcome
  − information about commitment to learning and social development
  − a teacher’s comment.

In Semester 1 2006, all Year 7 reports were produced by the computerised system, this was extended to all years for Semester 2. In 2007 computerised reports were produced for all students in both semesters.

In 2007 a number of hands-on workshops about the computerised report system were held for classroom teachers, head teachers and year advisers. The majority of teachers have readily adapted to introduction of the report technology. In Semester 2 2007, a new file server was introduced that allowed teachers to use their home computer and Internet connection to access the school’s computerised report system.

There has been an enormous saving in school administrative staff time as there is no longer a requirement to spend many hours collating hand written reports.

Electronic copies of all reports are retained, in a secure location, on the school computer system. This provides a convenient way for executive staff and year advisers to access and review a report prior to meeting with a parent or guardian.

The new reports have been very well received by parents and students.

Parents

In 2007 different surveys were conducted for Year 7, Year 8-10 and 11-12 parents.

• 98% of Year 7 parents felt that their daughter had made a successful transition from primary to high school and felt that the school was meeting their expectations.
• 95% of Years 8, 9 and 10 parents responded that their daughters were happy to come to BGHS.
• Parents felt that communication from the school was good and there has been an increase in the number of parents accessing the school’s website over the past four years. 58% of Year 7 parents and 44% of parents of Year 8-10 students accessed the website in 2007 compared to 27% in 2004.
• Parents were supportive of school policy such as 95% support for wearing of full school uniform, with 69% of parents supporting disciplinary action for students who did not comply with the school’s uniform policy.
• A proposal to change the school’s provision of religious education was not supported by the parent community. There was only 22% support from Years 8-10 parents and 15% support from Years 11-12 parents for timetabled religious instruction for all Year 7 and 8 students using English, Maths and Science lesson time; and 36% support from Years 8-10 parents and 24% support from Years 11-12 parents for Christian religious seminars to be held once per term for each of Years 9, 10, 11 and 12.
• In the Year 11-12 parent survey it was found that the majority of parents (98%) and students were pleased with the new computerised reporting format.
• 46% of parents confirmed that their daughters in Years 11 and 12 have part-time work. 45% of parents did not feel that their daughter was coping well with time management and 34% felt that their daughters were not coping well with stress management. 41% of parents indicated that they would like additional...
support from the school to help them prepare their daughters for the HSC.

Students
A total of 173 Year 8 Science students were surveyed in 2007 in relation to the teaching and learning activities in Science to follow up a similar survey that took place in 2006.

Students indicate improvements in their satisfaction of science teaching in 2007 compared to 2006 in the following areas:

• My classroom is an interesting place to learn
• I try to do my best and take pride in my learning
• There is a balance between working on my own and working with others
• I know what I am expected to achieve in lessons
• My teachers expect me to do my best
• My teacher provides stimulating/interesting lessons.

There is still a need to continue to improve in the following areas:

• Introduce lessons to students
• Provide greater opportunities to discuss learning with individual students
• Provide greater opportunities to discuss with individual students ‘how’ to do the learning activities provided.

Student satisfaction is strong. Students are always willing to lead, coordinate and participate in school events such as International Day, Variety Night, overseas visits and carnivals. The attendance rate at the swimming and athletics carnivals in Semester 1 was equal to a normal school day, approximately 95%.

Teachers

There is a high level of staff satisfaction at Burwood Girls High School.

Areas which teachers identified in 2006 that they would like to see improved have been addressed in 2007:

• There is now greater access to technology resources in classrooms.

• Allocation of funds ($6.1m) for building program and grounds improvements was welcomed by all.
• Classroom management and discipline procedures have been more consistently implemented within the school.
• Few teachers apply for transfer to other schools.

Professional learning

A major priority for the school in 2007 was the professional development of all staff. Professional development for teachers was provided in professional learning activities such as:

• 100% of teachers participated in three school development days:
  – In Term 1, the focus was school policies and procedures such as welfare and assessment;
student achievement in the SC and HSC; and learning support for Year 7 students.

− In Term 2 we again ‘targeted technology’ with workshops on the use of Smart Data to inform teaching and learning of individual students; technological teaching resources Clickview and Smartboards (interactive whiteboards); and effective literacy strategies for teaching and learning.

− In Term 3 we continued with our technological focus with a day called ‘Connecting with Generation Y’. Teachers participated in a selection of workshops lead their colleagues extending participant knowledge of Smart Data, Smartboards, Clickview, RISC, behaviour management, and anxiety and depression in young people.

• In 2007 we introduced a formalised induction program for new teachers at Burwood Girls, including beginning teachers. The program included a series of workshops on topics such as assessment, classroom management, welfare policy and procedures, teaching and learning resources and technology.

• New scheme teachers and their supervisors were also supported with specialised training at a school and regional level.

• As part of our compliance training, 38 teachers received CPR training at three workshops presented at a school level (51% of teachers).

• Most faculty groups were able to conduct a full day workshop to address areas such as assessment, website design, provision for gifted and talented students in programs and use of enhanced data.

• A survey of staff in Semester 1 2007 found that teachers wanted greater access to professional development sessions at a school level. 68% of teachers requested more professional development at faculty meetings, 96% of teachers requested more professional development at staff meetings, and 43% of teachers requested more professional development at executive meetings. As a result, there was an increase in the number of professional learning sessions at faculty, staff and executive meetings in Semester 2 2007.

• In our survey of staff 80% of teachers indicated that they would be willing to participate in school-based courses, presented after school hours, if they were designed and offered in an area of professional learning need for them as individuals. This is a future direction for the Professional Learning Team in 2008.

• 70% of teachers participated in additional professional development activities both within and outside school such as workshops, conferences, network meetings, information days and faculty training workshops.

• The average expenditure per teacher on professional learning increased from previous years to $650 in 2007.

School development 2006 – 2008

Targets for 2008

Target 1: Quality Teaching and Learning

Strategies to achieve this target include:

• all faculty plans show evidence of planning through smart pack analysis

• each KLA publishes assessment programs for all students in Years 7, 10, 11, 12

• new student recognition and award system relates to values as well as academic achievement implemented

• destination plan developed for every exiting student in Years 10/11/12

• professional learning opportunities for all staff in technology

• all senior students have personalised pathway plans

• Evidence of QTL model in faculty plans.

Target 2: Improved Administration Procedures

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• new roll call policy and procedures implemented and evaluated
• conduct a review of the administration of the band program with recommendations to school council and principal
• clear and transparent processes for enrolment established
• customer service seen as a priority
• teachers familiar with computerised systems (reports, Timechart, RISC, ERN).

Target 3: Quality Learning Environment

IN MEMORIUM
ALAN WADDINGTON
1951 – 2007

Strong supporter of public education and valued member of the Social Sciences Faculty at Burwood Girls High School for 18 years.

Strategies to achieve this target include:
• manage building program to minimise impact of disruption
• involve staff and students in school improvements
• establish environmental committee.

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

David Allen, HT, Science
Judy Bokor, Parent, School Council
Robert Brett, HT, Mathematics
Elaine Browne, P&C President
Stephen Chan, Parent, School Council
Tim Cunningham, Chairperson, School Council
Colin Jones, Community Member, School Council
Mia Kumar, Principal
Frank Levy, Community Member, School Council
Janina Longman, Deputy Principal
Christina Nicholas, SRC member
Karyn O’Brien, Deputy Principal
Patrice Simpson, HT, Social Sciences
Rebecca Tong, SRC member
Arielle Tsoukatos, SRC member
Tom Ying, HT, History

School contact information
Burwood Girls High School
Queen Street, Croydon NSW 2132
Ph: 02 9747 3355
Fax: 02 9744 2797
Email: burwoodg-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
www.burwoodg-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
School code: 8152